

Individual Review Form

Proposal number: 2001-I205-2 Short Proposal Title: Traveling Film Festival/Oral History Project

1a) Are the objectives and hypotheses clearly stated?

Yes, there are two approaches; 1) to enhance learning and understanding of the San Joaquin ecosystem showing a photography exhibit in conjunction with the film festival and 2) the oral history project will garner greater support and credibility for CALFED missions by recording and documenting local history and relating to local individuals.

The two approaches are fresh and innovative from the standard proposals one might see. The objectives and hypotheses are well thought out. Intangible benefits can be difficult to identify, but the use of film can be a powerful motivator.

1b1) Does the conceptual model clearly explain the underlying basis for the proposed work?

Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion. The CALFED initiative is complex and wide-ranging and it is difficult to explain the impacts to individuals within their own communities. By bringing the media of film (a familiar vehicle) and history using local people, the “big” ideas of CALFED can be better accepted by the average citizen. The film festival clearly has demonstrated success in other communities and offering these films to greater audience in the Central Valley is important.

Oral history projects are popular and offer first-hand accounts of history from those who shaped it. Local community history has always been a way to engage regional support for ideas and concepts, and this is no different by attempting to garner support for the Pilot Restoration Project. Sometimes you have to start from a historical perspective and knowing how the river once was will help people imagine the possibilities for the future.

1b2) Is the approach well designed and appropriate for meeting the objectives of the project?

Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion

The Film Festival has a proven track record and demonstrated success and critical acclaim. Combining the festival with the photography exhibit adds a dimension that might reach a greater audience that otherwise wouldn't come.

The Oral History project is designed to meet the objectives of the project because the Pilot Restoration Project has already received some local criticism and another perspective needs to be used. It is possible that the regional population has no idea how the resource has changed over the years. It's easy to think that the local resources have always looked the same throughout the years and in this case, that's certainly not true. In addition, I think using the oral history vehicle is non-threatening and interesting in it's approach.

1c1) Has the applicant justified the selection of research, pilot or demonstration project, or a full-scale implementation project?

Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion. This is a full-scale implementation project based on existing films produced under separate contract. The project calls for expansion and inclusion with other elements via a CA `Council for Humanities. The film series has variety and diversity of interests that appeals to all ages and learning levels. This proposal projects expansion into underserved areas of the Central Valley. The Oral History component will document vanishing history and provide context for the Pilot Restoration Project currently proposed.

1c2) Is the project likely to generate information that can be used to inform future decision-making?

The Oral History project in particular is projected to increase support and influence decision -making with regard to the Pilot Restoration effort on the San Joaquin River. I agree that documenting historical natural state of the river will surprise and delight a great number of people who have never known the river except, as it exists now. Reconnecting to the “natural past” using local people to tell the story should deflect some criticism that the effort to restore the river is initiated by “outsiders”.

2a) Are the monitoring and information assessment plans adequate to assess the outcome of the project?

The success of the program is monitored via bookings, numbers in attendance- both good indicators, but it would interesting to test a sample of attitudes before and after. Exit interviews or focus groups could be used. The assessment plan could be expanded.

2b) Are data collection, data management, data analysis, and reporting plans well-described, scientifically sound and adequate to meet the proposed objectives?

Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion

The data collection and storing is straightforward via databases, reports, and websites. If the proposal included focus group or exit interviews, the process would need to be indicated.

3) Is the proposed work likely to be technically feasible?

Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion

Yes, the films are already completed and the proposal indicates existing bookings for the festival in conjunction with the photographic exhibit.

The Oral History film follows a typical format for this type of documentary and will require extensive research, but not impossible to accomplish.

4) Is the proposed project team qualified to efficiently and effectively implement the proposed project?

Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion

Very much so. This team is award winning and long standing reputation in the industry. The project team is well organized and possesses clear focus.

Summary Rating

I thought this was an excellent proposal and well written according to the guidelines. The proposal addressed the individual elements and criteria very clearly and made it easy to evaluate. The budget was very detailed and in line with current costs for projects of this type.

The Film Festival is an obvious winner for me and I can visualize an expansion to other venues. One per county doesn't seem like enough, but I realize that these projects take money and considerable coordination. I anticipate that as word gets out the venues will increase and every effort should be made to accommodate them. I was impressed by the awards and qualifications of the production team, and I have every confidence that they will do a very good job.

I think a more formal evaluation process should have been included to assess impact on attitudes and behavior as a result of the Festival and Oral History Project. Both projects hypnotized that support will increase and it would be interesting to see if that occurs.

The Oral History Project is imperative. As these landowners and farmers pass away so too their knowledge, perspective and first-hand accounts. Oral histories are an established and accepted protocol for documenting history. What a wonderful way to honor the accomplishments and experiences of these people and recreate the past. Further, the project goes one step beyond by laying a foundation for future restoration efforts. This really engages history in the living process from past to future. I liked the approach very much.

Excellent Summary Rating

| Overall Evaluation Summary Rating | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | |
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